

Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
1/19/78

Mr. Steve Bell
ABC News
1124 Connecticut Ave., NW
Wash., D.C.

Dear Mr. Bell,

By now I believe you know that I seek no personal attention and that when I write you about ABC's coverage of so-called assassination news my criticisms are not of you personally.

By now I know that New York has showbiz interests and pays no attention to your journalistic advice. Perhaps there is nothing that can't be done about this but I take a few moments between the end of today's show and my leaving for my weekly blood-testing to give you a little advice if you need it in the future.

Today's show was much less irresponsible. However, the areas of its not being irresponsible also involve no news at all. Oglesby was rehashing the old stuff that is not at all new in this release. He talked about withholding and covering up, simultaneously unable to isolate Hoover's traditional practice of cover-the-easy notes. (I have a collection of such Hoover handwritten notes several inches thick separate from these records.)

Example, the title of my first book, dated 2/15/65, is Whitewash. The subtitle of the second book, out in print 12/2/66 is "The FBI-Secret Service Coverup." The manner and means are first indicated in the Introduction to my first book, amplified in all of my subsequent books and in the most elaborate detail in the two most recent of the seven.

So, journalistically, the show aired no news in this at all. I've been after the FBI under FOIA on just this for a decade, with unreported by presidential if not historic successes, as recently as this past Monday, also unreported except for a Lardner story which could not include all the judge said about either the FBI or me.

Now that Jack Ruby was a potential criminal informant, FOI? Never secret. I wrote about it eight years ago. With the same records as the basis. They were never classified and never withheld in the Archives.

No pre-assassination files included on Oswald? Why did not those characters who live on the phoney attention they get go for that under FOIA. I have been after it for some years, as has a friend on the west coast.

CMA's "expert" does not even know the provisions of the FOIA, clear from his inability to inform the audience when it was germane.

"As much as 10,000 pages" are still withheld, he told the audience. And more than another zero because there are many more than 100,000 pages still withheld - and I've filed for the most important ones of them under FOIA, too. Best examples: Dallas and New Orleans Field Office files. Dallas was the Office of Origin - in ostensible charge and actually in charge and in receipt of the paper generated.

I doubt that ABC's show people really care about what all of this has meant or means to the country or to responsible journalism. Important, significant and I believe commercially as well as socially useful information abounds. I don't think ABC News will want to make any use of these records. But I won a court suit to obtain them without the fees I cannot pay, they were put in a milk truck yesterday noon and I've ordered ~~several~~ ^{several} file cabinets to hold them. You'll be welcome to free access. I expect to receive the earlier 40,000 pages soon. If I do not, I'll sue the bastards again and am certain I'll get them. They also will be available. The only restrictions on my files relate to individual rights, as to privacy, and on what I know beyond questions is irresponsible. I will not be part of any disinformation operation. Best wishes, Harold Weinberg

One More JFK Probe Witness Knocks on Heaven's Door

Manuel Artime, forty-five, Watergate figure and leader of the Bay of Pigs invasion against Cuba, died of cancer in Miami on November 15. His loss was another loss for the House Assassinations Committee, and for everyone who hopes that someday the full story will be known of America's attempts to overthrow the Cuban government and the far-reaching consequences those attempts may have had.

Artime could have provided valuable information on the vast CIA and Cuban exile network that was plotting against Castro in the early '60s, which the committee is now trying to investigate. Both Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby had extensive dealings with this cloak-and-dagger scene prior to the assassination of John Kennedy. A total of seven important probable witnesses for the inquiry have died in the last several years; Artime's death was the first of apparently natural causes (Short Takes, 12/3).

For nearly two decades, Artime was a popular leader of the Cuban exile community in Miami known as "Little Havana." A dedicated anticommunist, he worked closely with the CIA in its many attempts to harass and depose Castro. Handsome, charismatic and articulate, Artime was known in the exile community as the CIA's "Golden Boy" because of his leadership qualities and unbending faith in the CIA and America.

Artime, like many of his fellow expatriates, first fought with Castro's rebel army against Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista, but felt betrayed when he realized that Castro was aligning himself as a communist. By 1960 Artime was recruiting fellow Cubans for a CIA-arranged invasion of the

island to overthrow Castro.

The invasion scheme had been hatched during the Eisenhower days under the eager tutelage of Vice President Richard Nixon, and was inherited by a reluctant Kennedy administration. With the help of his good friend E. Howard Hunt, the CIA's political officer for the operation, Artime assumed the leadership of the invasion force, known as Brigade 2506. Artime was also a member of the Cuban Revolutionary Council, the provisional government that would take over once the "Liberation Army" carved a foothold in Cuba. The CRC, assembled by Hunt, had an office in New Orleans at the same address that the allegedly pro-Castro Lee Harvey Oswald would later use for his one-man branch of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

The invaders were crushed by Castro's forces within days after their landing at the Bay of Pigs on Cuba's southern coast. After spending twenty months in Cuba's jails, the survivors were ransomed out for \$62 million in medicine and supplies by an embarrassed Kennedy administration. Artime carried a special price on his head, costing the US government \$500,000.

If anything, the Bay of Pigs affair fueled the fanaticism of the exile leaders and their CIA handlers, and created a deep bitterness over Kennedy's failure to save the invasion by committing US military might when it was needed. Their sense of betrayal was inflamed when Kennedy addressed the newly returned Brigade 2506 at the Orange Bowl on December 29, 1962. After Artime and other invasion leaders handed him the Brigade's flag before thousands of exiles, Kennedy vowed it would fly one day over "a free Havana." At that same time, JFK had ordered a clampdown on their clandestine harassment of Cuba.

By the summer of '63, Artime, his spirits undaunted, began

preparations for another major assault on Cuba. He developed an alliance with President Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua and Carlos Prio Socorras, president of Cuba before Batista, for a project called Second Naval Guerilla. (Socorras, another prospective witness before the Assassinations Committee, allegedly shot himself through the head last April.)

The existence of Second Naval Guerilla, to this day, is being concealed where possible by the FBI, CIA and House and Senate intelligence committees. The script this time called for Castro to be assassinated before the invasion. (E. Howard Hunt admits he tried in vain to convince his CIA superiors to assassinate Castro "before or coincident with the [Bay of Pigs] invasion. . . .") The Senate's Church Committee, in its report on assassination attempts against foreign leaders, recounts the story of "AM/LASH," who was to assassinate Castro with a high-powered rifle in 1965. The report said nothing more.

Researchers have determined that AM/LASH was Roland Cubela, a friend of Artime, and that Artime himself (who was identified only as "B-1" in the Church report) provided Cubela with the rifle, complete with scope and silencer. According to the plan, once Cubela had killed Castro, Artime would launch his 750-man army from their training camps in Nicaragua and Costa Rica and strike Cuba when it was leaderless and bewildered.

Insiders claim that this whole Artime-Somoza operation was shut down when President Johnson sent the Marines to the Dominican Republic in May 1965 to put down an uprising. According to this explanation, LBJ felt one military operation in the Caribbean was enough. Others suggest that Castro's agents (and even the FBI) had infiltrated the training camps and knew the CIA's every move.

The Church Committee and other government agencies

apparently have tried to cover up Second Naval Guerilla for at least two reasons. The operation was in complete violation of Kennedy's, and presumably Johnson's, orders that all attempts to overthrow Castro be canceled. Second Naval Guerilla would thus be another example of the CIA's unfettered independence at the time. Full exposure might also directly link a key Watergate figure, E. Howard Hunt, to an assassination plot. After Howard Hunt and the Cubans were arrested for the break-in at the Democratic National Headquarters, Artime established the Cuban Defense Committee for the burglars. In the fall and winter of '72, his committee frequently funneled hush money from Hunt and others to the Cuban burglars. (President Nixon referred to it several times in conversations with John Dean, as recorded on the White House tapes. Artime was invited to Nixon's second inauguration shortly thereafter.)

Artime died at Miami's American Hospital of cancer of the liver and pancreas. He learned of the cancer only several weeks before his death. News reports claim that his hospital room was under very heavy guard, the reason for which is unclear. He leaves his wife and six children.

Artime was a loss for the Assassinations Committee in many ways, but primarily because he could have told whether Kennedy and Johnson knew of, let alone authorized, Second Naval Guerilla and its assassination plot. At a time when some people are arguing that Castro had Kennedy killed in response to the CIA attempts on his own life, and while others strongly suspect the CIA-Cuban exile band did it themselves in retaliation for being let down, it would be crucial to determine whether Kennedy, or any President, controlled the CIA at all.

Harvey Yazjian

Bethune Confidential
to Mrs. M. W. Artill

Dear Paul,

1/13/78

Your 1/10/78 is, I think, extremely important in my request for fee remissions, C.A.77-2155. Jim does not yet know about it. I write while awaiting a call from him, after which there is an enormous amount of pressing, deadline work to which I must get.

It is becoming increasingly apparent to me that the FBI is treating you differently to cover its ass, the first FBI law. It thus will say that they do not treat me the same because I am some special kind of ogre.

What they have just done has Jim as angry as I have known him to be. He gets angry now infrequently I believe my recollections on this are dependable.

FBI Bill Shackelford's call of the 19th to you makes it certain that the FBI was lying to all others, from press to DJ lawyers, or the DJ lawyers were lying to Jim to inhibit what he might be able to do by lulling him into thinking he had more time than he did when he is so overloaded. The lawyers claim not to have known this date until 1/12. In fact, they/~~had~~ FBI hand-delivered a letter to Jim dated 1/19 - but made the hand delivery on the 11th. It forecast the release for "mid-January," not any date.

This is so important I'll be using it--have added it as a postscript to my long letter to AG Bell demanding that he stop all these dirtworks and punish those who have committed offenses. Pre-eminently Shea for his defamations and his misuse of process.

The hearing is now set for Monday, 1/16. I have arranged for a press conference that afternoon. Hearing at 11 a.m. I will distribute copies of my Bell letter and one to Shea, make a few comments and take questions.

I do not have time to check the records I've received on myself. They can be from more than one file. For example, my FOIA requests are under Internal Security. Some of those you sent have an Internal Security code number, 105, for those with nationalistic tendencies. (Like LHO.)

Agreed on Freed/Lane. Worse than you say, as Howard spotted immediately when I sent him a copy of that memo.

On Dean piece, it was clear you did not utter some of the direct quotes--as I did not.

62-109060-1009 can be important to Jim in out C.A.75-226. Sure wish I'd had it earlier. For those who might want to carry this further, suggest that in chapter I think The Number of "hots" in WW I traced some reloaded ammo and on the basis of what was then available correlated the learning of this with the end of searches. While there is no way of knowing for sure this sure is suggestive of the real reason for the FBI refusal to conduct the chemical tests on QB, the whow bullet. They knew what they'd get.

Reur 12/27/77 to "Larry" Mary has and has refused to return my copy of the suppressed La. Oswald political files. I loaned her my only copy while I was travelling. You are welcome if you can get her to give you a copy. For Harry, too.

While I appreciate your explanation on behalf of the AIB I do not regard it as really addressing what I said to them. Sorry I missed your copy for a day. Lil found it. I'd mislaid it on my way to where I put the outgoing mail.

Perhaps what Ogleby misquoted on prime time TV is in a mailing that has not reached me, as is what Katz quoted on the fragments. Or vice versa.

The fact remains that they are crooks and insufferably arrogant, particularly for crooks. They are disinformers and I can think of no use they can possibly make that is the equal of use in court. I just don't have time to fool with such people or falsifications. I fear that I'll also not be able to make use of your fine lists promptly. I can't keep the old hours and should not but I had to work until 1 a.m. today. I've not been out of the house in the 15 hours I've been up - snowstorm. Not even time to exercycle today.

Thanks much for the very helpful 1/10 and the copies. Best,